



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

KENYON COX

On the Continent an artist is ordinarily a bohemian with long hair, untidy garments and little learning save in the use of brush or chisel. In England and America he is usually a cultivated gentleman, of elegant manners and becoming dress, learned in the history of his craft and generally well informed; a man shining in the best society and fitted to adorn any position. The example set by Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was not only a great painter, but a prince among men, has generally been followed by Anglo-Saxon artists.

Since the days of the Cathedral Builders there has been no such revival of architecture as that which we have witnessed in the United States during the last thirty years. The glory that was Greece almost lived again in the World's Fairs of Chicago and St. Louis, while the splendor of Spanish architecture with its possibilities of color was exemplified at the Panama-Pacific Exposition as never before. Tuscan architecture, even in the hands of Brunelleschi, never achieved anything of purer lines than the Library at Boston or the Mint at Denver. Since the disappearance of Aladdin's Palace there has been nothing more beautiful than the entrance hall of the Library of Congress, while the interior of its dome is one of the most nobly harmonious of man's creations. The great Italian tower attached to the Public Buildings at Springfield, Massachusetts, is, in my judgment, the most beautiful tower in the world save only Giotto's Campanile at Florence. Many of the states, like Wisconsin, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Missouri, and Utah, have erected splendid capitols modeled upon our glorious national edifice, but with variations that make them worthy of individual study. In almost every American city there has recently sprung up, as if by the stroke of a magician's wand, some building that is a thing of exquisite beauty. But the supreme triumph of American architecture is probably the Woolworth building in New York. America's one original contribution to architecture has been the sky-scraper, a thing so useful that it was plainly destined to infinite multiplication and yet so ugly that it seemed hopeless;

but the genius of Mr. Cass Gilbert transformed it into a resplendent shrine of perpendicular Gothic, which, lifting its snowy and gilded pinnacles to the height of eight hundred feet, is one of the most sublime and one of the most beautiful things on earth. In pleasing contrast with this magnificent revival of mediæval art is the exquisite classic purity, combined with originality, of the Lincoln Memorial at Washington.

In accordance with the spirit of the age, our triumphs have been mostly in civic architecture. It is the State, and not the Church, which is supreme in the minds and hearts of Americans. We are not noisy in our patriotism, like the French or the Germans; but the universal response of all our people to their country's call when the World's War demanded sacrifices, placed our patriotism and our idealism beyond question. Though our first allegiance is to the State, we are on the whole a religious people. While the President of the French Republic dares not enter a church for religious worship, it seems impossible in America to elect a man to that office who is not a churchgoer. And so we have constructed many noble religious edifices. No one can be insensible to the solemn beauty of Trinity Cathedral in Boston or the Chapel of Leland Stanford University, which we owe to the genius of Richardson. St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York is a noble piece of Gothic and St. Thomas is a Gothic masterpiece so original and so fascinating that none can fail to admire it; while the great Catholic Cathedral in St. Louis is one of the grandest specimens of the Romance style.

Architecture leads the sister arts. You must have a house before you proceed to adorn it, and the house should be a beautiful one to inspire the artist to do his best. It was natural that this splendid flowering of architectural genius should be attended by an awakening of painting and sculpture.

The sin of American painting had been its triviality. So far as mere technical skill was concerned, our painters were unsurpassed. But they seemed to have nothing to say. Whistler's fatal dictum that "Art should be independent of all clap-trap, should stand alone and appeal to the artistic eye or ear without confounding it with emotions entirely foreign to it, as devotion, pity, love, patriotism, or the like," had met with general accep-

tance. The favorite art teacher of America, William M. Chase, devoted his life to expounding the doctrine that it was immaterial what you painted provided you painted it well, declaring that Velasquez could make a sublime masterpiece out of a broken pot and a tin can. Art, which like literature, should be all-embracing, which should voice the deepest feeling and the loftiest aspirations of humanity, became the diversion of trifling dilettantes and soulless mandarins. It lost all touch with the great heart of humanity; and yet the artists wondered why so few were interested in what they did.

When it comes to the decoration of public buildings an artist must have something to say. The people may be mediocre judges of technical accomplishment; but they are the best judges of the worth of the message that the artist seeks to convey. The minds and hearts of our people are wholesome and sound, and any noble message conveyed in fitting terms meets with a prompt response. Shakespeare is the greatest of artists; and the boys in the peanut gallery never fail to applaud at the right place. The splendid edifices which our architects have reared call aloud for decoration; and the artists have responded nobly. So far, owing perhaps to our unhappy practice of dividing commissions amongst a number of artists, so that unity of design is impossible, we have had no perfect masterpiece of decoration, such as Raphael's Camera della Segnatura, Pinturicchio's Library of the Siena Cathedral, or Baudry's Foyer of the Paris Opera House; but with Mr. Blashfield and Kenyon Cox at their head, our school of decorative painters has for some years been easily the foremost of the world. These leaders have carried on in splendid fashion the two great decorative traditions. Mr. Blashfield has devoted himself to the style of Raphael with its perfection of line, its skill in composition, its spiritual elevation. His essay on Raphael as a decorative painter in his *Italian Cities* is beyond comparison the best exposition of Raphael's art from the decorative standpoint that has ever been written, and no living man comes so close in spirit or in execution to him who was justly hailed as the Prince of Painters. Kenyon Cox, on the other hand, carried on the glorious tradition of Venice, with its love of splendid color and its joy in sensuous beauty. He modeled his style on Paul Veronese, who

was not the greatest artist of the Venetian school, who lacked the depth and universality of Titian and the haunting charm of Giorgione, but who was its most accomplished decorator.

In the beginning Mr. Cox was led astray by the mighty genius of Puvis de Chavannes, and painted such masterpieces as the exquisite but almost colorless pictures illustrative of the arts and sciences in the Hall of Prints in the Congressional Library; but eventually he perceived that great as were the talents of the illustrious Frenchman, he had made a mistake in renouncing the charm of rich and glowing color; that there was no reason why the walls of a room should be of pale, lifeless tones; that a grand design would be made more delightful by clothing it in brilliant hues. Then he turned to the great Venetians for inspiration and guidance, and no artist of our day has come so close to equaling their achievement. Like Veronese, he was essentially a civic and not a religious painter. His religious works are few and not conspicuous in his achievement; but his great civic decorations, most of which are idealistic presentations of the principles of good government and of the blessings of the arts and sciences, adorn our public buildings from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and everywhere they are a joy to the eye, a delight to the soul, an inspiration to a richer and a nobler life. Born in 1865, he was not a young man when he passed away in the spring of this year; but his death was premature, for he still had the enthusiasm and fecundity of youth, and many of his latest productions, such as the splendid *Tradition*, now in the Cleveland Public Gallery, so glowing in color, so delightful in composition, so full of meaning, were among his finest works. It is sad to think of the noble masterpieces, full of beauty and full of thought, of which his death has robbed us.

Great as were the services to American Art which Mr. Cox rendered with his brush, those which he rendered with his pen were perhaps as great. He was our foremost and most inspiring art critic. His pictures are full of meaning because his mind was stored with vast learning in the field of art. He has found his own style, which was the appropriate vehicle for the expression of the message that he had to convey, and he adhered to it; but he knew with unusual thoroughness the history of art, and he was keenly alive to its every worthy manifestation.

The volumes of essays and addresses which he published from time to time are easily America's best contribution to art criticism. If I were asked which single book is the most enlightening and inspiring in the field of art and which the safest guide, I should answer, Kenyon Cox's *The Classic Point of View*. It covers almost the whole field, and the principles which it advocates with so much ability and with such charm of style are so just that it should be universally read. On the European Continent every gentleman and lady is supposed to be able to talk intelligently on art. Few Americans know or care anything about it; and so they are deprived of one of the greatest means of enjoyment, and they know not how poor are their lives in consequence. Few of our schools and colleges give any instruction in art; and when they do, it is usually from a merely technical standpoint. *The Classic Point of View* should be a text-book in every college. The young men and young women who become familiar with its pages will have a broader, a saner, a more enlightened view of art and a deeper appreciation of the beauties of nature.

Of all the answers to the silly cry of "Art for Art's sake"—meaning that art should have nothing to do with thought or emotion, but should be the plaything of languid mandarins who think that they dwell in ivory towers—it seems to me that Mr. Cox's *Artist and Public* is the most eloquent and the most conclusive. It is an appeal for the noble, the sane and the beautiful in art that cannot be read too often.

I do not pretend to agree with Mr. Cox in all his criticisms. It seems to me that in exalting Paul Veronese above Titian, who stands next to Shakespeare in his universality and in his sane humanity, he magnifies too much the decorative side of art; and his admiration for Mr. Sargent's *The Hermit*, in the Metropolitan Museum, which seems to me impressionism run stark mad, appears strangely at variance with the body of his doctrine; but on the whole his criticism is as full of common sense as it is of enlightenment; and the delightfully lucid style in which it is couched makes it a joy even to the uninstructed.

GEORGE B. ROSE.

Little Rock, Arkansas.